



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

[OMB 3060-0986; FRS 17340]

Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collections. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees. The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

DATES: Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email PRA@fcc.gov and to Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele, (202) 418-2991.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Control Number: 3060-0986.

Title: High-Cost Universal Service Support.

Form Number: FCC Form 481 and FCC Form 525.

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit, not-for-profit institutions and state, local or tribal government.

Number of Respondents and Responses: 2,049 respondents; 14,358 responses.

Estimated Time per Response: 0.1 - 15 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion, quarterly and annual reporting requirements, recordkeeping requirement and third-party disclosure requirement.

Obligation to Respond: Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. 151-154, 155, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 332, 403, 405, 410, and 1302.

Total Annual Burden: 53,955 hours.

Total Annual Cost: No Cost.

Privacy Act Impact Assessment: No impact(s).

Nature and Extent of Confidentiality: The Commission notes that the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) must preserve the confidentiality of all data obtained from respondents and contributors to the universal service support program mechanism; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal service program; must not use the

data except for purposes of administering the universal support program; and must not disclose data in company-specific form unless directed to do so by the Commission. Parties may submit confidential information in relation pursuant to a protective order. Also, respondents may request materials or information submitted to the Commission or to the Administrator believed confidential to be withheld from public inspection under 47 C.F.R. § 0.459 of the FCC's rules.

Needs and Uses: The Commission is requesting the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for this revised information collection. On November 18, 2011, the Commission adopted an order reforming its high-cost universal service support mechanisms. *Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establish Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663 (2011) (*USF/ICC Transformation Order*), and the Commission and Wireline Competition Bureau have since adopted a number of orders that implement the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*; see also *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Third Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 5622 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 27 FCC Rcd 605 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Fifth Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 14549 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 2051 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7227 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7766 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7211 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 10488 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et*

al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 3087 (2016); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 16-271; WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 10139 (2016); *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, Order, 32 FCC Rcd 968 (2017); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Order on Reconsideration, 33 FCC Rcd 11893 (2018); *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, Report and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 5944 (2017). The Commission has received OMB approval for most of the information collections required by these orders.

Through several orders, the Commission has recently changed or modified reporting obligations for high-cost support.

In September 2019, the Commission adopted the *Puerto Rico/U.S. Virgin Islands Stage 2 Order*, which allocated nearly a billion additional dollars to United States territories that had suffered extensive infrastructure damage due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria. *The Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and the Connect USVI Fund, et al.*, WC Docket No. 18-143, et al., Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration, 34 FCC Rcd 9109 (2019) (*Puerto Rico and USVI Stage 2 Order*). The Commission adopted similar accountability measures for recipients of this support as required of other high-cost support recipients to ensure that providers receive support “only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.” *Puerto Rico and USVI Stage 2 Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 9149, para. 72.

In the *2019 Supply Chain Order*, the Commission adopted a rule prohibiting the use of USF support to purchase or obtain any equipment or services produced or provided by a covered

company posing a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. *Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs*, WC Docket No. 18-89, Report and Order, Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and Order, 34 FCC Rcd 11423, 11433, para. 26. *See also* 47 C.F.R. § 54.9. In June 2020, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau issued final designations of Huawei Technologies Company (Huawei) and ZTE Corp. (ZTE) as covered companies for the purposes of this rule. *Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs – Huawei Designation*, WC Docket No. 19-351, Order, 35 FCC Rcd 6604 (PSHSB June 30, 2020) (*Huawei Designation Order*); *Protecting Against National Security Threats to the Communications Supply Chain Through FCC Programs – ZTE Designation*, WC Docket No. 19-352, Order, 35 FCC Rcd 6633 (PSHSB June 30, 2020) (*ZTE Designation Order*). Accordingly, USF recipients may not use USF funds to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, manage, or otherwise support Huawei or ZTE equipment or services in any way, including upgrades to existing Huawei or ZTE equipment and services. *Huawei Designation Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 6608, para. 10; *ZTE Designation Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 6637, para. 10. Moreover, USF recipients must certify that they are in compliance with this rule. *2019 Supply Chain Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 11454, para. 79; *see also* 47 C.F.R. § 54.9.

In the *CAF Phase II Auction Order*, in addition to rules requiring Connect America Phase II auction support recipients to report regarding support used for capital expenditures, certify regarding available funds, and certify that the Phase II-funded network meets performance requirements, the Commission also adopted rules requiring that Phase II auction support recipients must report information on served community anchor institutions and certify regarding bidding on FCC Form 470 postings for eligible schools and libraries in census blocks where the carrier receives auction support. *Connect America Fund, et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90, et al.,

Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 5949 (2016) (*CAF Phase II Auction Order*). Recipients of Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and Connect USVI Fund Stage 2 support must also observe these requirements in addition to the general requirements for high-cost support recipients and requirements specific to the Uniendo a Puerto Rico Fund and Connect USVI Fund programs. *See Puerto Rico and USVI Stage 2 Order*, 34 FCC Rcd at 9150, para. 74.

We therefore propose to revise this information collection, as well as Form 481 and its accompanying instructions, to reflect these new and revised requirements. We also eliminate one requirement that is associated with obligations no longer in effect for certain carriers. Finally, we propose to increase the burdens associated with existing reporting requirements to account for additional carriers that will be subject to those requirements.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

Marlene Dortch,
Secretary,
Office of the Secretary.